



# Rediscovering the Theoretical Base of Records Management and Its Implications for Graduate Education

## Searching for the New School of Information Studies

Tyler O. Walters

In the Fall 1992 issue of *JELIS*, Eugenia K. Brumm published a brief description of the graduate records management education program at the University of Texas at Austin Graduate School of Library and Information Science. Brumm attempts to demonstrate to library educators that they should support graduate records management education because it has a theoretical base that is shared with library science. While Brumm's goal is desirable, this article sets out to show that linking records management theory with the broader discipline of information science and its information resource management perspectives is a more fruitful and accurate approach. It will further show that the critical link between archives and records theory is central to records management education, while library science theory is only tangential to it. The author calls for two changes: (1) that information professionals and educators broaden their awareness beyond the library profession to include other information professions and their disciplinary knowledge and theoretical bases and (2) the evolution of "new schools of information studies" will respect the need for independent degrees based on the distinct disciplinary knowledge that defines and supports each information profession. He strongly endorses the development of graduate degree programs for the nonbibliographic information professions in the United States.

In the Fall 1992 issue of the *Journal of Education for Library and Information Science* appeared a short description of the pioneering graduate education program in records management being developed at the University of Texas at Austin Graduate School of Library and Information Science. The author, Eugenia K. Brumm, assistant professor

of library and information science at the University of Texas at Austin, reached out to her colleagues to show them that records management deserves a graduate education program because it has a base of theoretical knowledge that informs the work of records managers. In support of her plea, Brumm addresses five areas of misconception about records

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management. They are filing equals records management; records management should be an undergraduate course or program; one course in records management is sufficient preparation for functioning as a records manager; records management should be taught in schools of business; and records management has no theoretical or conceptual construct. Each of the areas touches upon key issues that define the management of records as a discipline, and the existence of its own theory. Brumm's willingness to move beyond the familiar ground of library science education and recognize the educational needs of another major information profession is exemplary. Who thought that such a short article could hold so much significance?

Brumm's description calls into question the very nature of several information professions. Among these fields are librarianship, records management, archival management, museology, information resource management, and information systems design and analysis. Her description also indicates clearly how little information professionals in the United States seem to understand about the disciplinary nature of their professions. The disciplinary nature of a profession means that it has a body of theoretical knowledge

that informs the methods and actual practices of its members. These bodies of knowledge for the respective professions can grow through performing research on issues relevant to them. They can also be taught through an education program to students who aspire to enter a particular information profession. Through research and teaching, the bodies of knowledge that support certain information professions can become fields of study in today's academic institutions. This is already the case with some of the aforementioned information professions, but not all. Ultimately, this is the purpose of Brumm's short article: to convince library educators that there are other information professions with a body of knowledge that can and should be taught to students in institutions of higher learning.

However, the community of information professions' collective lack of understanding about the diverse bodies of theoretical knowledge has caused their approaches to graduate education to be flawed, the existing programs to suffer, and the graduates to be ill prepared. For instance, Brumm works very hard to find linkages between library science theory and records management. In so doing, she misses completely how significant the historical linkage between archives and records is



in records management education. Instead of attempting to conjure up shared theoretical knowledge where there is none, Brumm's justifications would prove much stronger if she explained the relationship between modern records management and information science and how they relate within an educational paradigm of information studies pedagogically.<sup>1</sup> A more accurate and powerful argument is that archives/records and library science are subsets within information studies education whose theoretical bases are distinct, but both are linked in theory and method to the broader and newer academic discipline of information science. This approach would prove much more fruitful than trying to link records management directly with library science.

While addressing some of the cardinal assertions articulated by Brumm, this article sets out to show that the linkage between archives and records theory is salient in records management education and that library science is tangential to it. I ask information studies educators to consider these points when developing graduate education for nonbibliographic information professions in the United States. The inseparable lives of records and archives will be illustrated and, thus, archival management and records management, and ultimately graduate archival education and graduate records management education. But first, a working definition of "information science" is needed. Then a few of the perspectives put forth by Brumm need redressing.

The phrase "information science" has been inferred in this article's introduction to designate a new field of study. Since this phrase is currently ongoing close examination and refinement, it is difficult to completely explain its meaning. Instead, indications of how it is perceived today and how it

relates to records management will be touched upon. Today many faculty members in library and information science schools are grappling with the meaning of "information science." Some definitions have been offered that bear significance for understanding and furthering the theoretical base of records management. Information science is described as "the study of the theory and practice relating to the creation, acquisition, processing, management, retrieval, and dissemination of information." Another closely related term, "informatics," is defined as "the study of structure and properties of information, as well as the application of technology to the organization, storage, retrieval, and dissemination of information."<sup>2</sup>

Applying the study of information science to traditional records management practices has given rise to what is known as information resource management (IRM). It is defined as "a managerial discipline that views information as a resource analogous to financial, physical, human, and natural resources, and stresses the efficient and effective handling of information." IRM involves the management of such information resources as computer-processed data files, computer-processed text files, networked communications, and the routine "paperwork" and records of an organization. These types of information—information from automated systems—and the procedures performed on them have become the media and tools with which the records manager works inside the modern corporate organization. With the advent of computer-generated information, the phrase "records management" has essentially evolved into "information resource management."<sup>3</sup> It's a new phrase that includes the former, but reflects the changes in information production and communication brought on by new information technology. Hence, the devel-



opment of theories and methods relating to managing recorded information internal to organizations is an important aspect of the study of information science.<sup>4</sup>

Let's turn away from the cutting edge momentarily and examine more established definitions that are central to this discussion. Records management—what is it? As Brumm states, it is the application of systematic and scientific control to all the recorded information that an organization needs to conduct its business.<sup>5</sup> Thus, *records* are defined as “documents created or received and maintained by an agency, organization, or individual in pursuance of legal obligations or in the transaction of business.” Lastly, the *records manager* is “an individual within an organization who is responsible for managing the life cycle of records created and received by the organization.”

The definitions of corresponding archival terms demonstrate the inseparable nature of archives and records. *Archives* are defined as the “documents created or received and accumulated by a person or organization in the course of the conduct of affairs, and preserved because of their continuing value.” Hence an *archivist* is “a person professionally educated, trained, experienced, and engaged in the administration of archival materials.”<sup>6</sup> Notice the similarities in the definitions of “records” and “archives.” Both comprise documents created, received, and maintained (or accumulated) by an organization (or agency) or individual. Both exist because of the “conduct of affairs,” or “transaction of business,” by these entities. The difference is that the definition of “archives” states that archives are “preserved because of their continuing value.” The definition of records makes no mention of the value possessed by the record. From these definitions, one can conclude that the archi-

vist manages records bearing continuing value and the records manager manages all records, those with continuing value that one day will be transferred to the archives' custody as well as those without continuing value that will be purged at some point in their life.

At first glance, the distinction between archivists and records managers may appear to lie in which point during the life of the record the particular records professional engages in his practice. But the distinction does not evenly divide based upon the age of the record. In fact, it does not divide according to age at all. The responsibilities of archivists and records managers are delineated upon the nature of the value of the record, not their stage in the life cycle. Archivists are interested in one particular value potentially present in records. That value is continuing value. Records possessing continuing value provide an impartial and full documentary representation of an organization or individual over time. Archivists select records of continuing value through identifying the records' inherent ability to give evidence to significant activities in the conduct of affairs of an organization or individual. The archivist intends to protect the existence of such records through their active and semi-active use phases until they are no longer needed for continual operation by the office (or person) of origin.<sup>7</sup> At that time, they are entrusted to the custody of the archival repository.

The records manager works with other members of the institution that generate and manage records, including the archivist, to decide when records of noncontinuing value can be discarded based on legal, fiscal, and administrative parameters. These parameters are usually codified in legal statutes and institutional policies. While the records manager tends to all records, the archivist identifies those that have continu-



ing value based on the circumstances of their creation. Records management practices involving records creation control, records keeping systems, and automated information systems management and analysis all impinge upon the creation, maintenance, and communication of archival records. In practice archivists must know how records managers function and how they apply their techniques. In fact, these professionals are one and the same in many organizations.<sup>8</sup>

The recently published "Guidelines for the Development of a Curriculum for a Master of Archival Studies Degree," released by the Society of American Archivists (SAA) in January 1994 best addresses the nature of the relationship between archives and records, and thus archivists and records managers:

The nature of archival documents depends on the circumstances of their creation (i.e. why they are made or received), not merely on whether they have been selected for permanent preservation, the manner and extent of their use over time, or even their current repository. The circumstances of their creation impart to archival documents unique evidence of societal events and actions and of legal rights and obligations. They (archival documents) therefore need to be safeguarded from the moment of their creation.

Furthermore, the guidelines state:

Archivists are the professionals responsible for the documents' protection at every stage of their life cycle and, eventually, for the documents communication to any user with the right to consult them.<sup>9</sup>

As described in the quotes above, the involvement of the archivist from the point of records creation and throughout the records' life cycle is jus-

tified and required. Both archivists and records managers are actively involved in managing records throughout their life cycle. Information professionals and educators should be able to accept this fact. The perception of the roles of the archivist and the records manager put forth here indicates that there is not much difference between the two. In fact, the purpose of this examination is to illustrate that the closeness of these two professionals is quite profound.

In her article, Brumm recognizes the existence of the life cycle of records, asserting that "records management emanates from a holistic view of an organization's records." However, if records management is to be practiced from a holistic viewpoint, then where is the place of archives or, in other words, where is the management of records of continuing value? Unfortunately, the heavily intertwined lives of archives and records described above is utterly nonexistent in Brumm's description of records holism.<sup>10</sup> While the management of records "belongs to the realm of information," as claimed by Brumm, within that realm exists a specific form of information known as records. An entire profession has already matured around the management of records. This field is known as the archival profession. The theories belonging to the discipline of archival science have been documented over the last three hundred years, beginning with the study of diplomatics in Europe, and deserve records management educators' careful consideration.<sup>11</sup>

Armed with a better understanding of the missions, responsibilities, and methods of archivists and records managers, let's turn to the principal assertion put forth by Brumm in her statements regarding misconceptions about records management. Brumm correctly points out that the notion of records management's being devoid of theoretic-



cal knowledge is misguided. She further states that because it has such a large base, it "suffers from multiple theory disorder." This disorder refers to its theoretical knowledge base as "theories of information organization, information needs, information uses and users, concepts of information search and retrieval, and knowledge of the information life cycle theory—interwoven with theories of management." Brumm displays wonderful insight and makes great strides in identifying the theories and methods that inform modern records management. But what about theories relating to the nature of the circumstances that produce records? Certainly theories about processes within organizations that create records would be important to the theoretical construct of records management. Such theories are found in the discipline known as archival science.<sup>12</sup>

Ironically, in the issue of *JELIS* immediately following the issue with Brumm's article (vol. 34, no. 1), archival educator Luciana Duranti writes of the archival body of knowledge and its development by proto-archivists concerned about authenticating records in the eighteenth century. Duranti tells about the early development of archival theory referred to as "archival doctrine," defining it as "the formulation of ideas about the nature of records aggregations and about their relationships with their creator, with the facts contained in them, and with each other." She identifies the first elements of archival doctrine present in Dom Jean Mabillon's writings on diplomatics as early as 1681 and states that archival doctrine methods were being taught in European archival schools across the continent by the late 1700s.<sup>13</sup> Over three hundred years ago, the elements of a theoretical base of records management were being written.

Duranti further informs her readers

that by the 1840s archival doctrine incorporated methods regarding the organization, description, preservation, and disposition of records. Archivists such as Francesco Bonaini and the Prussian historian-diplomatist Johan Friedrich Bohmer further developed the science of archives, writing on ideas about what are archival records, how to work with those records, and applying these thoughts in practice. By the mid-nineteenth century, European archivists/records managers codified a body of knowledge about the creation of records, their existence as documentary evidence attesting to the activities of the creator, and the organization and description of records.

Another writer and observer of the history of archives and records management, Lawrence J. McCrank, delves even further back into the history of Europe to find evidence of centuries-old records management activity. McCrank does not find theoretical writings on the ideas that will form archival science, but finds an equally, if not more important, activity: the practice of archives and records management principles. These activities are traced to northeastern Spain during the formation of the Crown of Aragon in the twelfth century.<sup>14</sup> The research presented in one of McCrank's recent articles is significant in fostering an understanding of the development of modern records management. In his 1993 *American Archivist* article McCrank explores:

A burst of intensive documentation activity . . . to reveal the dramatic growth of medieval archives; archival management systems and records centers; the development of sophisticated methodologies such as simultaneous registration and formalized document production; indexing, tagging, heading, and classification techniques; rudimentary

records management and conservation programs; and experimentation in codification, supraregional standardization, format control, multimedia, and improved communications through courier service, addressing, notarization, posting, and proclamation.<sup>15</sup>

Given the history and the relationship between archives and records management, it can be concluded that at the base of records management theory lies archival theory. In other words, many records management practices are born from the same body of knowledge as archival practices. Archival theory encompasses a "systematic understanding of what documents were made, received, and kept; how and why this was done, and how and why these activities changed or did not change over time."<sup>16</sup> Archival science "is divided into pure theory, or ideas about the nature of archives (read: archival records), and the application of that theory through methodology (the ideas archivists hold about the treatment of archives) and practice (applying these methods in the real world)."<sup>17</sup> This knowledge determines the actions taken by records professionals throughout the records' life cycle, whether as active records in the office, semiactive records housed in a records center, or records preserved in an archives. Certainly, archival science must be of interest to records managers. The reason so many observers of records management cannot see its theoretical base is that they start looking in the wrong areas. Its theoretical base begins with the closely allied field of archival science and its theories about the nature of records, their creation, organization, retrieval, preservation, and use.

Yet, given the historical development of archival and records management and archival theory over the past three hundred years, Brumm still maintains that "intellectually and histori-

cally, library science is the home of records management education."<sup>18</sup> How can library educators deliver education about the management of records? Their science does not address the context of records creation within modern organizations. This is an important corollary area of study in information science with its emphasis on technology and information resource management methods.<sup>19</sup> Its existence as the heart of archival science should now be clear as illustrated above. The distinct emphasis of library bibliographic techniques rests upon using uniform data structures to describe information intended for public consumption (publications).<sup>20</sup> Applying information technology to such basic areas as information storage and retrieval, topics commonly treated in computer and information science courses, are shared concerns of the library, archival, and records communities. However, more complex issues, like information and records creation, born from an organization's business transactions are not shared. Managing information creation and communication within organizations as represented in the perspectives of information resource management and archival management is distinct from the bibliocentric heart of library science. Moreover, library science is not salient to the management of records.<sup>21</sup>

Terry Eastwood, associate professor in the School of Library, Archival, and Information Studies at the University of British Columbia, has eloquently and succinctly described the realms of library science, archival science, and records management:

The modern world has seen two documentary disciplines arise and flesh out a theory, methodology, and practice. These disciplines are library science and archival science: one concerned with documents purposely generated to dis-



seminate knowledge, the other concerned with documents created as a product of utilitarian activity; one the product of human thought turned on any given subject of interest, the other arising naturally in the course of our transactions with each other. . . . Library and information science are essentially concerned with locating, organizing, and facilitating use of information that exists external to activity. . . . By contrast, archival science deals with information that is internal to the activity in question, generated as part of it and lingering as evidence of it. Archival science properly includes study of the genesis and management of this internally generated information throughout its existence, so records management as it is commonly understood falls in the domain of archival science.<sup>22</sup>

These are most significant words that should guide our understanding of the relationships among these three activities and how to develop professional curricula for them.

Instead, Brumm continually strains to link library science with records management education. There are several instances where she links the two without demonstrating their allegedly shared theoretical base. However, in her attempts, she inadvertently indicates the pervasiveness of the bibliocentric nature of information education in the United States today. For instance, Brumm makes claims such as "the lack of knowledge about what comprises records management is the direct result of the scarcity of library educators who are experts in the field," "graduate-level education in library schools is based on the premise that information professionals with M.L.S. degrees will eventually manage supervisors or other [records] managers and will develop [records] programs and initiate change within their operating environments,"

and that "records management professionals realize that the best records managers are the ones that hold master's degrees in library science."<sup>23</sup> What records managers need in the way of graduate education is just beginning to become available in the United States.

Brumm's best attempt to illustrate a link between library science and records management comes in her story about Irene Warren. Warren, a librarian, was contracted in 1910 by the Globe-Wernicke filing-cabinet company to instruct their salesmen in filing techniques so they could demonstrate them to potential customers. To infer that records management was created by a librarian who was contracted by a file-cabinet company is plainly ill informed. Besides, if filing does not equal records management, as asserted by Brumm in her "Misconception #1," then how come Irene Warren's filing instruction constitutes the genesis of modern records management? The Warren story is perhaps a coincidental link based upon a pioneering and ambitious librarian who was aware of and active in other information management realms. The information professions clearly would benefit from more Irene Warrens among their ranks. But this story does not link library science theory to records management theory. Library science is not the intellectual home of records management education. Brumm fails to prove the linkage, her assertion is categorically false.<sup>24</sup>

The lack of knowledge about records management theory in the United States has little to do with library educators. It is a direct result of the fact that archival science has not been viewed as a distinct discipline that supports the archives and records professions. This has resulted in the absence of graduate-level archival education degree programs in the United States; however,



they flourish in Europe, Canada, and many nations across the world. Information professionals and educators simply must understand that graduate education in library science is the first and foremost developed among the information professions in the United States; however, it is not the only information profession worthy of a graduate degree program. The individual information professions need their own degrees based upon the distinct nature of their theoretical bases. This is the only way students will become immersed in the vast knowledge base that identifies each profession, so they may be best prepared for the long life of continual challenges that information professionals will face in the twenty-first century.<sup>25</sup>

Let's look at an example of an information profession needing graduate education based upon its distinct theoretical base other than the often-quoted fields mentioned thus far. Museum curators are a group of information professionals who manage cultural information based from objects, or artifacts. They compile and interpret information from the artifact's form, physical composition, and evidence of its use by studying the construction and functionality of the artifact itself. These methods are employed to better understand the artifact's purpose and the broader cultural and social context it reflects. Why should employers of museum curators require them to hold an M.L.S.? Clearly, they have educational needs that are distinct from library science. As it turns out, museum administrators do not require M.L.S. degrees of their curators. Much the same circumstances exist for education in the archives and records professions. Employers of archivists and records managers should prefer these employees who hold master degrees in information studies (information resource management being

the major field of study) and master degrees in archival studies. But the impetus to establish these degrees in the United States is just now beginning to build. In order for this to come to fruition, information professionals and educators need to broaden their awareness of information disciplines and theories beyond the library science discipline, and beyond the borders of the United States.

When Brumm's article progresses to discuss the "new educational paradigm" created at the University of Texas Graduate School of Library and Information Science, all of a sudden archives is brought into the fold. This is done by cross-listing some of the archives courses available in the school for aspiring records managers. However, archives have not been mentioned in the article beforehand, so the reader could not possibly begin to fathom why these courses are at all relevant. Furthermore, the only time archives and records are mentioned in the same sentence is when the unfortunate reference is made about the alleged "anachronistic tensions" between the two. Of all the shared characteristics between archives and records management, why does Brumm chose to highlight the existence of an anachronistic relationship?<sup>26</sup> If this is such a central characteristic of their relationship, then how does she explain the existence of a nationwide professional organization such as the National Association of Government Archivists and Records Administrators, or functioning archival operations such as the National Archives and Records Administration, the New York State Archives and Records Administration, the North Carolina State Archives and Records Administration, as well as other similar operating units found across local government, universities, corporate organizations, and businesses? The benefits of the relationship between ar-



chival and records management is not articulated, nor recognized.<sup>27</sup>

Brumm claims that the Texas approach to records management education "disposes of the anachronistic tension." This author certainly hopes it is true when Brumm states that "because courses in archives are part of the records management program (and vice versa), students in records management learn that cooperation with archivists is essential in ensuring protection of archival records from the very beginning of the life cycle." This is a most admirable goal and is essential if the endeavors of both records professionals are to be successful. However, given the notable absence of references to archival science as a major theoretical contributor to records management, Brumm offers no evidence that the anachronistic tensions no longer exist, particularly in a pedagogical sense. *Sharing courses among the programs will not necessarily reconstitute the shared theoretical base between the archives and records professions and effect that base's delivery to students in graduate education programs.* To do this, the theoretical body of archival science must be woven into the heart of the educational perspective that informs the design of the graduate education programs.<sup>28</sup>

A new school of information is needed to accommodate the distinct disciplinary nature that defines the individual information professions.<sup>29</sup> In the 1990s, the overshadowing nature of library science education is giving way to the confluence of education relating to these disciplines, resulting in a new educational paradigm of information studies.<sup>30</sup> Schools of library science are evolving into schools of library and information science, and in some cases, they are maturing further into schools of information studies. At some schools the change is reflected in its title only, maintaining essentially the same li-

brary science curricula. However, in other cases, schools of information studies are emerging with a completely revamped curriculum. It is becoming increasingly evident that some schools' range of studies go well beyond librarianship.

Interestingly, several schools that have changed their name and incorporated the phrase "information studies" are also revamping their curricula. For these schools the phrase is used to mean something more than just library science and information science. Schools such as Drexel University's College of Information Studies, Rutgers University's School of Communication, Information and Library Studies, University of Michigan's School of Information and Library Studies, and University of British Columbia's School of Library, Archival, and Information Studies are examples. The phrase "information studies" is used in this article to denote a broad interdisciplinary paradigm that incorporates any field and its corresponding bodies of theoretical knowledge that pertain to the management of information. The paradigm relates specifically to education, where research and instruction in these information fields come together under one academic unit. The information fields form a coalition to create a new academic scheme, the new school of information studies.

In the broader-based school of information studies of the future, each of the information disciplines can be represented by independent academic programs offering independent degrees.<sup>31</sup> An existing example of this educational approach is the University of British Columbia School of Library, Archival, and Information Studies. At UBC, separate M.L.S. and master of archival studies (M.A.S.) degrees are offered. The M.A.S. and M.L.S. programs do not require their students to take courses from



the other program. The M.A.S. program treats information science topics within archival studies courses as they become relevant.<sup>32</sup> In this type of model, multiple programs and degrees could be developed to meet the educational needs of many information professionals, including librarians, archivists, records managers, museum curators, information resource managers, and information systems designers and analysts.<sup>33</sup>

The multiple program configuration closely resembles a college of liberal arts and sciences, where the strength is at the department level and several degrees are offered. The concept of "schools of information studies," patterned similarly to the familiar college of liberal arts and sciences, is an appropriate educational concept to develop graduate education for any information profession desiring it. *It should foster the maturation of both the disciplinary base for each information profession and the interdisciplinary linkages between fields as they manifest themselves in the United States.* Perhaps schools of library and information science, which now address the educational needs of at least two information professions, will evolve into schools of information studies and unify many more of them. No longer will library science education be mistaken for appropriate education in fields such as conservation, museums, archives, records management, and information resource management. Degree programs such as the M.A.S., the M.L.S., and the M.I.S. together can build a strong and viable home for themselves on university campuses as schools of information studies. This approach respects the boundaries of the autonomous professions and their need for unique educational programs.

There is much superficial discussion criticizing the multidegree approach, stating that library schools are

moving away from specialization in the face of economic realities and the downsizing of library school budgets. Yet, this is precisely the point in favor of the multidegree approach. It has been the library school's specialized focus on only one information professional—the librarian—that has landed it in so much trouble recently. The administrators of research universities simply do not see a quality of research in library schools similar to that which is being conducted in other divisions of the university.<sup>34</sup> They also see that library schools, unlike many other schools on the research university campus, educate only one type of professional.

While some observers of trends in library education fixate on the erosion of support for their schools, others see the phoenix that may rise from their ashes. The cup is half-empty, or half-full, depending on one's perspective. For records-based information professionals, as for records managers and archivists, the cup is definitely half-full. Let's face it, an entire school to serve the educational needs of just one profession is a very expensive proposition. It is proving to be too burdensome for many universities. The new school of information studies will aspire to belonging within the research university community. It will support research into the very nature of information and its management, not just bibliographic techniques of displaying library holdings to users, for example. This broadening process and inclusion of all realms of information will prove a receptive environment for the education of records managers, archivists, and other information professionals. Schools of information studies will be much stronger than their library school ancestors because of their diversity, serving the needs of many professions that will be critical to anyone functioning in twenty-first century society.



Counter to the alleged move away from specialization in library and information science schools stands the experience of other colleges and schools within research universities. A recent study sponsored by the Council of Graduate Schools found that over six hundred types of master's degrees exist today in the United States, in addition to the familiar master of arts and master of science degrees. The study also indicates that "of the people earning master's degrees since the early 1980s, about 90 percent earned degrees in professional fields outside the traditional liberal arts and sciences." The trend of increasing professional education programs at the master's level is well documented in this study.<sup>35</sup>

In the January 1994 issue of its newsletter, the Office of the Vice Provost for Research at Iowa State University responded to the study:

Clearly master's degrees are serving very specific professional objectives. They have become the leading edge of higher education for professionals throughout the work world. . . . Such degrees can be highly specialized, catering to very specific needs of a profession or strengths of the academic unit offering the degree.<sup>36</sup>

The Iowa State article further asks, "Does ISU sufficiently recognize this trend in graduate education?" Individuals involved in information studies education should be asking themselves the same question. Some of them appear not to be recognizing the larger trends in graduate and professional education. Certainly a school of library and information science already dabbling in the information science realm has much to offer the records-based information professions. As the aforementioned study concludes, specialization is in. Directly serving the educational needs of several individual yet related professions is a

way to justify a school's existence. Several schools of library and information science are not far away from providing the professional education needed by records managers and archivists.

The distinct bodies of knowledge defining the individual information professions cannot be brought to bear on each other in an effort to enhance all their methods until information educators and professionals understand their disciplinary nature and their respective boundaries. Yes, information professionals can learn much from each other's methods. Even though this article stresses the distinctiveness of the professions, it merely describes what must be the first step. The next steps to foster meaningful interactions will be left to future discussions. Certainly archivists have much to learn from information scientists if they are to identify, preserve, and make available for use the archival records that are created, maintained, and communicated through automated information systems.<sup>37</sup> The same can be said for records managers who need to learn how to manage all records born from these systems.

The new schools of information studies can provide the necessary forum for this cross-fertilization. I hope this new paradigm will reflect and respect the needs presented in this article. If library educators want to play a leading role in developing education for other information professions, and clearly they do, they must learn of the information disciplines that support these professions and address how to present them in a pedagogically manageable manner, manifesting themselves in new professional curricula. Only when graduate education in the information professions reaches this stage will the misconceptions about the records management and archival management professions fall by the wayside. Hopefully, today is when information



studies educators and professionals alike will decide to take steps toward understanding each other better and build strong academic institutions to improve their services in American society.

### References and Notes

1. The phrase "information studies" is used to refer to professional education regarding a plethora of information management fields beyond just the fields of library science and information science.
2. Lewis J. Bellardo and Lynn Lady Bellardo, comps. *A Glossary for Archivists, Manuscript Curators, and Records Managers* (Chicago: Society of American Archivists, 1992), 18; Heartsill Young, ed. *The ALA Glossary of Library and Information Science* (Chicago: ALA, 1983), 118. The specific ALA definition, now over ten years old, is "The study of the creation, use, and management of information in all its forms."
3. Mary F. Robek, Gerald F. Brown, and Wilmer O. Maedke, *Information and Records Management*, 3d ed. (Mission Hills, Calif.: Glencoe, 1987), particularly pp. 31-32.
4. This perspective is reflected in Richard M. Kesner, *Information Systems: A Strategic Approach to Planning and Implementation* (Chicago: ALA, 1988). See also Frederick J. Stielow, "The Impact of Information Technology on Archival Theory: A Discourse on an Automation Pedagogy," *Journal of Education for Library and Information Science* 34 (Winter 1993): 53.
5. Note that this definition is not all that different from the one provided for "information resource management."
6. All definitions in this paragraph are quoted from Bellardo and Bellardo, *Glossary*, 3, 4, 28, 29.
7. Jay Atherton, "From Life Cycle to Continuum: Some Thoughts on the Records Management-Archives Relationship," *Archivaria* 21 (Winter 1985-86): 45, "archivists generated the first initiatives in records management, to serve archival ends."
8. Atherton, "From Life Cycle to Continuum," 46-47.
9. "Guidelines for the Development of a Curriculum for a Master of Archival Studies," *Archival Outlook* (Society of American Archivists newsletter, Jan. 1994), 2-3. See also *Planning for the Archival Profession: A Report of the SAA Task Force on Goals and Priorities* (Chicago: Society of American Archivists, 1986), 4, where it states "records and information management is the means by which the archivist intervenes as needed throughout the life cycle of records to ensure the proper management of prospective archival material."
10. In addition to the literature cited in this article, see articles and books like Robert L. Sanders, "Archivists and Records Managers: Another Marriage in Trouble?" *Records Management Quarterly* 23 (Apr. 1989): 12-20; J. J. Hammitt, "Government Archives and Records Management," *American Archivist* 28 (Apr. 1965): 219-22; James B. Rhoads, *The Role of Archives and Records Management in National Information Systems: A RAMP Study* (Paris: UNESCO, 1983); Richard C. Berner, *Archival Theory and Practice in the United States: A Historical Analysis* (Seattle and London: Univ. of Washington Pr., 1983); Luciana Duranti, "Education and the Role of the Archivist in Italy," *American Archivist* 51 (Summer 1988): 346-55; Bryan Corbett and Eldon Frost, "The Acquisition of Federal Government Records: A Report on Records Management and Archival Practices," *Archivaria* 17 (Winter 1983-84): 201-32; Patricia Bartkowski, "Records Management and the Walking Archivist," *Georgia Archive* 3 (Summer 1975): 125-34; Gerald F. Brown, "The Archivist and the Records Manager: A Records Manager's Viewpoint," *Records Management Quarterly* 5 (Jan. 1971): 21-22, 38; and Thornton W. Mitchell, ed. *Norton on Archives: The Writings of Margaret Cross Norton on Archival and Records Management*, 2d printing (Chicago: Society of American Archivists, 1979). Last, see Frank Evans, comp. *Modern Archives and Manuscripts: A Select Bibliography* (Chicago: Society of American Archivists, 1975).



- See section entitled "Archives Administration and Records Management," 13–19, where there is a wealth of citations examining the intertwining nature of archives and records.
11. "Diplomatics" is defined as "the discipline that studies the genesis, form, and transmission of archival documents and their relationship with the facts represented in them and with their creator, in order to identify, evaluate, and communicate their true nature." Bellardo and Bellardo, *Glossary*, 11. For a complete look at the use of diplomatics in archives and records management, see the six-part series by Luciana Duranti, entitled "Diplomatics: New Uses for an Old Science," *Archivaria* 28 (1989): 7–27; 29 (1989): 4–17; 30 (1989): 4–20; 31 (1989): 10–35; 32 (1989): 6–24; 33 (1989): 6–24.
  12. The knowledge base of archivists is recognized to be greater than just archival science or information science. The SAA M.A.S. guidelines identify other bodies of knowledge that comprise the discipline of archival studies, as described in the United States. These corollary areas are drawn from library and information science, history, management, conservation, law, public policy, and a diverse group of research methods. For further description, see "Guidelines for the Development of a Curriculum for a Master of Archival Studies," and Tyler O. Walters, "Creating a Front Door to Archival Knowledge in the United States: Guidelines for a Master of Archival Studies Degree," *Archival Issues* 18 (Fall 1993): 85–89.
  13. Luciana Duranti, "The Archival Body of Knowledge: Archival Theory, Method, and Practice, and Graduate and Continuing Education," *Journal of Education for Library and Information Science* 34 (1993): 9.
  14. "The advent of systematic documentation and recordkeeping, organized archives and preservation, and new forms of intellectual access, as well as elements of what today is considered records management, can be identified in the reign of King Anfon I (II), 1154–1196." Lawrence J. McCrank, "Documenting Reconquest and Reform: The Growth of Archives in the Medieval Crown of Aragon," *American Archivist* 56 (Spring 1993): 257. Also, for an overview of the management of familial archives and public records of the Roman era, see Anne-Marie Schwirtlich, "Archives in the Roman Republic," *Archives and Manuscripts* 9 (1981): 19–29.
  15. McCrank, "Documenting Reconquest and Reform." The quote is taken from the abstract on 256.
  16. Duranti, "Archival Body of Knowledge," 10.
  17. Walters, "Creating a Front Door," 87.
  18. Even in his landmark essay "Library and Information Science: The Educational Base for Professional Records Management," *Records Management Quarterly* 15 (Apr. 1981): 48–53, J. Michael Pemberton only agrees that there are parallel philosophical perspectives between librarians and records managers. The shared course work of which he speaks addresses the similar uses of technology and their applications to the respective fields. The points raised by Pemberton do not address the disciplinary knowledge bases born from the nature of the information with which each professional works. Pemberton's use of the word "parallel" is significant. Webster's dictionary defines "parallel" as "extending in the same direction, everywhere equidistant, and not meeting." In short, Pemberton does not assert a shared theoretical base, nor a historical claim to library schools being the home of records management education. He merely points to records management education's future compatibility with the mission of schools of library and information science.
  19. For example, Robert V. Williams in his article "Records Management Education: An IRM Perspective," *Records Management Quarterly* 21 (Oct. 1987): 36–40, 54, 71, refers to Donald A. Marchand's definition of "information resource management": "the management of the resources (e.g., data processing, text processing, communications, information centers, manual paperwork/records [emphasis added]) of an organization devoted to the handling or collection, storage, maintenance, transmission, or distribution of information."



20. See Williams, "Records Management Education," 40, where he writes: "despite the addition of the terms 'information science' to the names of traditional library schools, many are still just that: predominantly library oriented and concerned only with the management of externally produced information." "The distinctiveness of the records management profession (and the related associations) could be lost or subsumed in the much larger library profession."
21. Letter from Richard Kesner, cochair, SAA Committee on Automated Records and Techniques, to Frank Boles, cochair, SAA Committee on Education and Professional Development, Sept. 2, 1993, in author's possession: "current library science practices, et al., are not salient to the dynamics of information creation, communication, and so forth in the complex modern organization." Also see Richard J. Cox's essay entitled "Archival Education in the United States: Old Concerns, but New Future?" in his book *American Archival Analysis: The Recent Development of the Archival Profession in the United States* (Metuchen, N.J.: Scarecrow, 1990), 99-112.
22. Terry Eastwood, "Educating Archivists about Information Technology," *American Archivist* 56 (Summer 1993): 460.
23. The author's words in brackets are intended to clarify to what type of information management Brumm is referring.
24. In 1967 Frank Evans chronicled the genesis of contemporary records management in the United States at the National Archives in his article "Archivists and Records Managers: Variations on a Theme," reprinted in Maygene F. Daniels and Timothy Walch, eds. *A Modern Archives Reader: Basic Readings on Archival Theory and Practice* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. General Services Administration, 1984), 25-37.
25. Terry Eastwood, "Nurturing Archival Education in the University," *American Archivist* 51 (1988): 238.
26. Twenty years ago, records manager Alan Ridge called for archivists and records managers to "acknowledge our mutual interdependence" in his article "Records Management: The Archival Perspective," *Records Management Quarterly* 9 (Jan. 1975): 25.
27. Even in information education in the United States there exists at least one faculty position bearing the title Assistant Professor of Archives and Records Management, and an entire graduate program at Western Washington University is known as the Graduate Program in Archives and Records Management, administered by the history department no less.
28. Gerald Ham and others, "Is the Past Still Prologue?: History and Archival Education," in *Historians and Archivists: Educating the Next Generation* (Bloomington, Ind.: Joint Committee on Historians and Archivists of the American Historical Association, the Organization of American Historians, and the Society of American Archivists, 1993), particularly 11, 22, and 23. See also Timothy L. Ericson, "'Abolish the Recent': The Progress of Archival Education," *Journal of Education for Library and Information Science* 34 (Winter 1993): 34.
29. For a recent example of curriculum restructuring, see Suzanne Bertrand-Gastaldy, Paulette Bernhard, and Jean-Marc Cyr, "Reconstructing a Master's Degree Program in Library and Information Studies: The Université de Montreal Experience," *Journal of Education for Library and Information Science* 34 (Summer 1993): 228-43.
30. Library and information science educator J. Michael Pemberton stated on the Open Library/Information Science Education Forum Listserv, March 8, 1993, that "the problem with library education is, in part, that it doesn't stand comparison with other species of professional education: physicians study medicine, not 'hospital,' and lawyers study law, not 'courtroom.' The study of librarianship is the study of techniques: the study of information is the study of theory and principles applicable in all the information domains. Where there is theory and principles there can be meaningful research at a \*research\* university. Will the last 'library school' please turn off the lights on its way out?"

With regard to confluence, the pre-eminent writer on American archival



- education, Richard J. Cox, has recently posed the question, "Will there be one information profession that includes all of these now related 'information' fields, or will they simply have similar educational programs and professional agendas?" About the contribution of archival education to the greater realm of information education, Cox comments that "these related fields must also gain an increased awareness about the preservation of information with continuing value to information creators, users, and society." Cox, *American Archival Analysis*, 106.
31. For an example of professional curriculum development in archival management, see James O'Toole, "Curriculum Development in Archival Education: A Proposal," *American Archivist* 53 (Summer 1990): 460-66.
  32. See Terry Eastwood, "The Origins and Aims of the Master of Archival Studies Programme at the University of British Columbia," *Archivaria* 16 (1983): 35-52.
  33. Toni Carbo Bearman, "The Education of Archivists: Future Challenges for Schools of Library and Information Science," *Journal of Education for Library and Information Science* 34 (1993): 66-72.
  34. See studies like that of Kathleen Garland and Galen E. Rike, "Scholarly Productivity of Faculty at ALA-Accredited Programs of Library and Information Science," *Journal of Education for Library and Information Science* 28 (Fall 1987): 87-98. Also, refer again to J. Michael Pemberton's remarks in note 30.
  35. Clifton F. Conrad, Jennifer Grant Haworth, and Susan Bolyard Millar, *A Silent Success: Master's Education in the United States* (Baltimore, Md.: Johns Hopkins Univ. Pr., 1993); "The New Age Master's Degree," *Research and Graduate Education: Newsletter of the Office of the Vice Provost for Research and Advanced Studies and Dean of the Graduate College* (Ames: Iowa State University, Jan. 1994), 4.
  36. "The New Age Master's Degree," *Research and Graduate Education*, 4.
  37. Charles Dollar, *Archival Theory and Information Technologies: The Impact of Information Technologies on Archival Principles and Methods* (Ancona, Italy: University of Macerata, 1992).